fisheries in the maritime zones of India for conservation and sustainable management of fisheries resources. Under the provisions of the draft Act, any Indian citizen including traditional fish workers can obtain permission for fishing in the maritime zone outside the territorial waters. Fishing in the territorial waters shall continue to be governed by the coastal States/Union Territories under their respective State laws. Adequate safeguards for protection of traditional fish workers would be ensured.

Fishing vessels registered under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 or under any other applicable Central Act or any State Act, would by eligible for obtaining permission under the proposed Act.

Proposal to increase CIP of foodgrains

*331. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL:

SHRI D. RAJA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has a proposal to increase the Central Issue Price (CIP) of foodgrains supplied to Above Poverty Line (APL) families through the Public Distribution System; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Central Issue Prices (CIP) of wheat and rice supplied to Above Poverty Line (APL) families through Public Distribution System (PDS) have not been revised since 2002. During this period, Government have increased the Minimum Support Price (MSP) in order to provide more remunerative prices to farmers. Costs on account of other incidentals of procurement have also increased. This has led to an escalation in food subsidy and created a large gap between CIP for APL families and open market prices. The Department is examining a proposal to revise the CIPs of wheat and rice for APL category with a view to reducing the difference between the CIPs for APL and market price of wheat and rice.

Granting of patents to Konkan Railways

*332. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM:

SHRI VIJAYJAWAHARLAL DARDA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether 18 patents, including ACD, Track Identification System and Sky Bus have been granted to Konkan Railways;

(b) if so, whether commercial utilization and adoption of these valuable patents has been started; and

(c) whether any foreign railway system has shown any interest in making use of them in countries where hilly track trains are in operation?